

**AFRI**  
**Water for Agriculture Challenge Area**  
**FY 2014**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. [What is the Water for Agriculture Challenge Area?](#)
  2. [What is the focus of the program?](#)
  3. [What is the funding available for this year?](#)
  4. [How many awards will be made in FY 2014?](#)
  5. [What project types are available?](#)
  6. [What grant types are available?](#)
  7. [What are some of the general requirements of the application?](#)
  8. [What is an integrated project?](#)
  9. [What is a CAP project?](#)
  10. [What is a FASE project?](#)
  11. [What are the eligibility requirements for integrated projects?](#)
  12. [What are the eligibility requirements for FASE projects?](#)
  13. [Is a letter of intent required to submit a full application?](#)
  14. [What is the page limit for a letter of intent?](#)
  15. [What is the deadline to submit a letter of intent?](#)
  16. [What is the page limit for CAP and FASE project proposal narratives?](#)
  17. [What is the deadline for full applications?](#)
  18. [If I receive an award, when can I expect to start?](#)
  19. [Where can I obtain more information?](#)
  20. [How do I identify an international partner?](#)
  21. [Do international partnerships make my proposal more or less competitive?](#)
  22. [What should I do if I want to make an application that includes an international partner?](#)
  23. [How do I plan a budget with an international partner?](#)
  24. [Is NIFA party to any current relevant international agreements of which I should be aware?](#)
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1. What is the Water for Agriculture Challenge Area?
    - The Water for Agriculture Challenge Area is a new program to help address critical water problems such as drought, excess soil moisture, flooding, quality changes and others in rural and agricultural watersheds across the United States. Funding will be used to develop management practices, technologies, and tools for farmers, ranchers, forest owners and managers, public decision makers, public and private managers, and citizens to improve water resource quantity and quality. NIFA's approach will link social, economic, and behavioral sciences with traditional biophysical sciences and engineering to address regional-scale issues with shared hydrological processes and meteorological and basin characteristics.
  2. What is the focus of the program?
    - The program focuses on developing solutions for water management that link food, water, climate, energy, and environmental issues.
  3. What is the funding available for this year?
    - NIFA anticipates \$30 million will be available to support the Water for Agriculture Challenge Area program designed to help solve critical water problems in rural and agricultural watersheds across the United States for projects up to five years (FY 2014 –

FY 2018).

- In FY 2014 approximately \$6 million will be available in support for this program. Funding of projects beyond FY 2014 is contingent upon the availability of funds, and the best interests of the US government. Funding in FY 2014 does not obligate NIFA to any future-year commitments.

4. How many awards will be made in FY2014?

- Approximately 4-6 awards will be made for FY2014.

5. What project types are available?

- Only integrated projects. The projects should include at least two of the three functions: research, education, and extension. Additional information on integrated projects is available at:  
<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated.html>.

6. What grant types are available?

- Coordinated Agricultural Projects (CAP)
- Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement Grants (FASE) (NIFA's Strengthening Awards: New Investigator, Sabbatical, Equipment, Seed, CAP, and Conference)

7. What are some of the general requirements of the application?

- Focus on significant regional scale issues
- Goal-based and able to solve the identified water problem(s)
- Must include a data management plan
- Must described a management plan for the work proposed
- Should include collaboration of multiple institutions
- Requires a letter of intent (LOI)

8. What is an integrated project?

- Integrated projects include two of the three functions of agriculture knowledge (i.e., research, education, extension). The functions should be interdependent and necessary for the success of the project, and no more than two-thirds of the project's budget may focus on a single component. Additional information on integrated programs, including tips for writing integrated project applications, is available at [www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated.html](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated.html).

9. What is a CAP project?

- A Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP) supports large-scale, multi-million dollar integrated projects that promote collaboration, open communication, and the exchange of information; reduce duplication of effort; and coordinate activities among individuals, institutions, states, and regions.

10. What is a FASE project?

- Food and Agricultural Science Enhancement (FASE) grants help institutions develop competitive projects and attract new scientists and educators to careers in high-priority areas of national need in agriculture, food, and environmental sciences.

11. What are the eligibility requirements for integrated projects?
  - Eligible applicants for integrated projects include: Colleges and universities, 1994 land-grant institutions (tribal colleges), and Hispanic-serving agricultural colleges and universities.
12. What are the eligibility requirements for FASE projects?
  - FASE Grants have additional eligibility requirements; please see Part II, D 3 of the RFA for details.
13. Is a Letter of Intent (LOI) required to submit a full application?
  - Yes. An LOI is required and is a prerequisite for submission of a full application.
14. What is the page limit for a Letter of Intent?
  - The LOI is limited to **three** pages for CAP projects and **two** pages for all other project types.
15. What is the deadline to submit a Letter of Intent?
  - April 17, 2014 (5 p.m., ET)
16. What is the page limit for CAP and FASE project proposal narratives?
  - The CAP and FASE CAP proposal narratives are limited to 18 pages; all other proposal narratives are limited to 7 pages.
17. What is the deadline for full applications?
  - August 13, 2014 (5 p.m., ET)
18. If I receive an award, when can I expect to start?
  - At least 6 months after the submission deadline date for the program.
19. Where can I obtain more information?
  - For complete information please go to:  
<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/waterforagricultureafri.cfm>
20. How do I identify an international partner?
  - NIFA relies entirely on applicants to use their own networks to identify partners.
21. Do international partnerships make my proposal more or less competitive?
  - International partnerships are a dimension—nothing more or less—of a proposal, and are assessed as part of the entire proposal. Including an international partnership—even those in which the international partner brings his/her own funding to the proposed work—does not make the proposal more or less competitive. NIFA uses peer-review and the selection criteria described in the RFA to assess the merits of proposals. Any proposed international partnership must clearly address RFA goals and contribute to American agriculture.

22. What should I do if I want to make an application that includes an international partner?
- Prior to LOI submission and the development of a full collaborative application with an international partner, we **strongly encourage** U.S. applicants to engage the RFA's point of contact to confirm that the topic meets NIFA's mission to support high priority issues relevant to agriculture, to clarify application procedures, and to receive further instructions for a joint application. For additional guidelines visit <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/globalengagement.cfm> under resources tab.
23. How do I plan a budget with an international partner?
- Most international participants in NIFA research grants can receive funds from a sub-contract issued from the U.S award recipient's sponsored program management office. The roles and activities of the international collaborator should be clearly identified and integrated with the proposal objectives and described in the budget narrative. Funding modalities must be clear and, where needed, sub-contracts in place.
24. Is NIFA party to any current relevant international agreements of which I should be aware?

NIFA's strategy for global engagement centers on developing carefully considered partnerships that can advance U.S. agriculture and global food security. Examples include:

- In 2013, NIFA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the U.S.-Israel Bi-national Agricultural Research & Development Fund. More information is available at <http://www.bard-isus.com/funddes.aspx> and <http://www.bard-isus.com/local.aspx?lfid=62>.
- Also in 2013, NIFA piloted a joint program with the UK's Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council on "Animal Health and Production and Animal Products". For more information please go to pages 14-17 of [http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/pdfs/14\\_afri\\_foundation\\_mod.pdf](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/rfas/pdfs/14_afri_foundation_mod.pdf).
- NIFA will continue to provide partnership opportunities with Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases with other USDA agencies. <http://www.globalresearchalliance.org/community/alliance-member-countries/member-country-page-usa/>.
- Joint North American Carbon Program with United State Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), (US, Canada, and Mexico) <http://nacarbon.org/carbona/>.
- Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research with USGCRP (Asia-Pacific countries) <http://www.apn-gcr.org/>.